

**Minutes for COUNCIL MEETING of McMaster University Retirees Association
January 14, 2009, 1:30PM
Student Centre Room 220**

Present: Cliff Andrews, Helen Barton (chair), Beth Csordas, Geoff Evans, Helen Dietsche, Mike Hedden, Joe Laposa, Michele Leroux, Kathy Overholt, Joan Parker, Wayne Rouse and Marianne Van der Wel

Regrets: Al Fraser, Margaret Jenkins, Allisan Noble, Pam Penny, Kathy Ryan and Anne Sinclair

1. Welcome & Regrets:

Helen Barton welcomed everyone to the new year!

2. Minutes of Previous Meetings

a) The following correction was made to the Council meeting minutes for December 10, 2008:

Page 4, under "Lunch Bunch" change "aobut" to "about"

MOTION

- Geoff Evans **motioned** that the minutes be approved with the above correction.
- Joan Parker **seconded** the motion.
- **Carried** unanimously

3. Business Arising

(a) Scholarship Endowment Fund (Beth Csordas): Beth reported the endowment fund as of January 8/09 was at \$23,448, about 73% of our goal.

(b) MURA Cards (Kathy Overholt): Stuart Winn bought 15 cards. Bryan Prince Bookstore took a second batch of 10 cards on consignment.

(c) Volunteer Network (Helen Barton) The volunteer web site will be ready in 1-2 weeks. The launch will take place after that. We will inform members through "muramembs-1" when ready. The development office will do a special postal mailing (paying for the postage) for those not part of "muramembs-1" using MURA envelopes.

(d) Clinical Faculty Pension Surplus Distribution RMA sent a letter to the chair of the Board of Governors, copied to Helen and Les, to re-state that they had no involvement in the decisions made regarding the surplus distribution but only agreed, reluctantly, to distribute the money. Dr. John Gately, the clinical faculty member involved in the original negotiations, is gathering his documentation and will send that to Helen and Les. After that Les and Helen will write their report with their conclusions and recommendations.

e) "Sampler" Recreation Program (Joan Parker) Instructors for the various activities were limited. Hence, using the MURA survey results, Athletics and Recreation has set up an 8-week program of alternating fitness and yoga instruction (the two most popular options from our survey) followed by a choice of walking, table tennis, volleyball or badminton in the second hour each week. This program will be on Tuesday afternoons starting on March 3 and is open to all MURA members, their family and friends. We will advertise the program through MURAnews and muramembs-1. There will be a price advantage for early registration.

f) Telecommunications Online Directory (Helen Barton) - No Report

g) News on CARP (Pam Penny): No report since Pam is away.

4. Correspondence

- Marianne, as our secretary, has sent thank you cards to John Hemmer and Sam Scime for the use of the audio equipment at the Christmas lunch. She also is about to mail thank you letters to Al Fraser, Human Resources, Wal-Mart (Ancaster) and East Side Mario's for contributing gifts for draw prizes at our Christmas lunch, and to the President's Office for the chocolates.

- We received a thank you letter from John Froud, our 2008 Book Prize winner. He also won the prize in 2005.

- This thank you, plus one from the Awards department were sent to Beth Csordas' husband. Helen Barton will contact the Awards department again to fix the contact information. Beth, as MURA Treasurer, is the correct contact.

- Ellen Ryan let us know about an intriguing retirees program at the University of Victoria. They run a very successful 6-8 week speaker series on light academic or non-academic subjects. The speakers are all retirees, usually retired professors but not always. They have a terrific response from their retirees. We may want to consider doing something similar but we would need a volunteer to "spearhead" such a program.

- Through muramembs-1, we have sent out a survey regarding the "Athletics & Recreation Program" and announced the RBG event "Glass Under Glass" show on February 10.

- Human Resources circulates a bi-monthly paper calendar of free or modestly priced events arranged by different groups on campus. Groups such as "Healthy Workplace", McMaster Employees Spirit Society (M.E.S.S.) and Environmental Occupational Health Support System and Soul Food provide these events. See:

<http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/eohss/> ,
<http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/mess/> ,
<http://www.workingatmcmaster.ca/healthy-workplace/> and
<http://csd.mcmaster.ca/soulfood/>

- CIBC Mellon has sent out pension letters regarding this year's pension increases and the Human Resource letters have been mailed out.

5. President's Report (Helen Barton) - No Report

6. Treasurer's Report: (Beth Csordas)

Beth circulated this year's budget with actual spending to date and our three year budget projections (green sheet) to help us see how we're doing.

Beth explained that the -\$587.11 amount for the "Greeting Cards" refers to the MURA note cards and indicates that we have sold almost \$400 worth of cards as the original cost was \$1735.12. As we sell more, this amount will go down to zero. From then on as we sell still more, this amount will become positive and will reflect our profit.

The amount spent, to date, for the MURAnews is for two issues and represents approximately 40% of the budget for this item. The postage amount is a little higher than anticipated.

There was discussion on how to reduce newsletter costs. It was explained that one reason for asking MUFA, CAW555 and the President's office to fund MURA was to reach all our members with all issues of MURAnews, which was not the case when we had voluntary fees. To encourage more members to "opt-out" of receiving the MURAnews through the postal mail, we will contact recently retired members (say 6-plus months ago) and ask them to consider switching to the on-line version.

Assuming our endowment fund is successful, the \$1250 for Gerontology awards will no longer be in the budget as of the year 2011/2012.

Although we have budget projections for the next three years, Beth asked all people with a budget to provide her with change information to be able to update the 2009/2010 budget. She circulated "McMaster University Retirees Association Budget Preparation" forms (on green).

7. Information Reports From Committees

a) AGM (Pam Penny) -

Council agreed that Wednesday May 27 was a good date for our annual AGM as it falls in the period, April 1 to June 30, as required by our constitution and avoids convocations.

Suggested topics for a speaker were:

- Dr. Walter Peace, still an active faculty member, to speak on Hamilton's geography
- The Tiger Cat owner, Bob Young
- The Evolution of Health Care in Hamilton (possible speakers might be **Murray Martin or Brenda Faulkner**)
- Resources for Seniors - possible speaker from the local CCAC (Community Care Access Centre)

After a show of hands, "Resources for Seniors (CCAC)" was the most popular followed by "The Evolution of Health Care in Hamilton". The Geography of Hamilton by Walter Peace was popular but we felt it was a bit too soon after Brian Henley's talk last year about the history of

Westdale and McMaster.

b) **Cards** (Helen Dietsche) - Helen Dietsche sent Bereavement cards to the families of Elizabeth Nagy of Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics and Tom Reitsma of the Physical Plant.

c) **Constitution** (Chair: Vacant, Joan Morris Consultant) - no report

d) **Membership** (Pam Penny) - There were 6-7 new retirees in January 2009 but no official report as Pam was away.

e) **MURAnews** (Joan Parker)

Joan circulated the revised MURAnews committee portfolio and the updated MURAnews Policy and Guideline statements (lilac sheets). Since the MURAnews has evolved over time, we needed to add more detail and clarify the main responsibilities of the committee. Geoff Evans suggested that we change the start of the first sentence from "The main thrust of this Committee is..." to "The objectives of this committee are..." We agreed and will check other portfolios and make the same change if it applies..

Motion:

- Wayne Rouse **motioned** that we accept the revised MURAnews Committee Portfolio Statement (with the one change that Geoff Evans suggested), and the updated MURAnews Policy and Guidelines as presented to council.
- Kathy Overholt **seconded** the motion.
- **Carried** unanimously.

f) **Nominating** (Helen Barton reporting) -

A "Call for Nomination" needs to be in the winter issue of MURAnews including the nominating committee members. That committee needs to submit their report to Council at the March meeting. The report, as modified and approved by Council, is published in the Spring MURAnews. Names can be added to the list of nominees after the committee's report and at the AGM itself.

We discussed who would chair the committee (normally the Past President). The committee also requires two members from council who are not leaving their position and are willing to serve.

Motion

- Geoff Evans **motioned** that Helen Barton (our president, who must leave at the end of this term according to our constitution which allows only two consecutive terms in any position) chair the committee.
- Helen Dietsche **seconded** the motion
- **Carried** unanimously

- Geoff Evans also **motioned** that Helen Dietsche and Mike Hedden, both remaining on council for next year, be members of the committee.
- Joan Parker **seconded** the motion
- **Carried** unanimously

Since timing was tight, Helen suggested we approve the following three people to fill the two non-council seats on the committee; two of the

three will be named to the committee by Helen based on availability:

- Lorraine Allan (our Board of Governor's representative),
- Donna Findlay, retiree from the President's Office, and
- Lynn Hopkinson, retired from Finance

Motion

- Wayne Rouse **motioned** that Helen Barton contact Lorraine Allan, Donna Findlay and Lynn Hopkinson to find two from this group who would be able to serve on the nominating committee.
- Joan Parker **seconded** the motion
- **Carried** unanimously

g) Pension & Benefits (Geoff Evans)

The Pension & Benefits Committee will meet shortly after Les Robb provides his report on the next Pension Trust Committee meeting.

Michele Leroux reported that all future hourly employees, except those in Parking, will have self directed group RRSP's. To date there have been no discussions to raise the issue of self directed group RRSP's for salaried employees.

Cliff reported that hourly pensioners will get a 1.61% raise this year.

h) Special Events (Margaret Jenkins) Helen Barton reported for Margaret.

The RBG "Glass Under Glass" event with lunch at the RBG will be on February 10, 2009. There will be a special showing for MURA members and friends of the newly opened, renovated McMaster Planetarium, followed by an afternoon tea at the university club, on March 31, 2009.

I) Trips (Joan Parker) -

Joan reported for Anne Sinclair that the "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" theatre trip on Jan 2 went well. Besides "The Brit Show" on Feb 18, Anne is planning a trip to Stratford to see "West Side Story" on April 15, the Shaw Festival for Noel Coward's "Brief Encounters" on May 1, and Camelot on July 14 at the Huron Country Playhouse. Brigadoon at the Drayton Festival Theatre is scheduled for October 9 and Anne is also planning a Mediterranean Cruise for November.

j) Christmas Lunch (Pam Penny) - report deferred to the February council meeting since Pam will be away until then.

A member had questioned the presence of children at the lunch, asking if members would be allowed to bring grandchildren to the Christmas as special guests. The answer is yes. The lunch is not restricted to MURA members.

k) Web Site (Marianne Van der Wel)

- CIRA: Helen Barton and Marianne are still working with Nicholas Solntseff to change the registration/ownership to MURA.

- Marianne had sent Council members a preview of the re-organized MURA web site and asked council their opinion. Council liked the new design

and suggested Marianne put up the new design as soon as she finishes it.

- Once this update of the MURA web site is complete, Marianne will examine WordPress to see if it's feasible to convert the site, following this new organizational structure, to obtain a more professional look. Other goals are to provide more flexibility for future designs and to make updates easier to do.

8. Information Reports from Liaisons

a) **University Board of Governors** (Lorraine Allan): Helen distributed Lorraine Allan's report from the December 18 Board of Governors meeting (blue sheet) and the President's report to the Board (yellow sheets).

b) **Colleges & Universities Retirees Associations of Canada (CURAC)** (Helen Barton) -

Helen Barton distributed the CURAC announcement regarding the Waterloo Insurance package negotiated for members of associations belonging to CURAC (white sheet with green logo). On the back, Helen presented the same announcement with comments from Helen explaining the situation.

Motion

- Geoff Evans **motioned** that we publish the CURAC announcement in MURAnews with the added two paragraphs that Helen wrote. MURA members can then investigate on their own and make their own decision.

- Helen Dietsche **seconded** the motion.

- **Carried** unanimously.

c) **MUFA** (Geoff Evans) - Geoff received a nice letter from Richard Stubbs, MUFA president, and will be having lunch with Richard next Monday.

Items Geoff plans to discuss are:

- examine agreements faculty make before retiring
- lack of grievance procedure for retired faculty
- the indexing formula
- transaction fees for grants
- why the MUFA president has a 1-year term, and suggest longer terms.

d) **CAW** (Kathy Overholt) - no report

e) **Hourly Staff Liaison** (Al Fraser) - No report

10. Other Business - Helen Dietsche tried using the Advancement Office's web site for contributing to our endowment fund, but found it impossible to use so decided to use the postal services to mail in her donation. Marianne reported that she used the site in December, found it difficult but was eventually successful after lots of confusion and frustration.

11. Next meeting

Wednesday February 11, 2009 at 1:30PM in the Student Centre, Room 220

12. Adjournment

Geoff Evans motioned to adjourn the meeting at 3:12PM